

able to remove soot from gilded furniture; the CCB conservators, who needed daily on-site activity for completion of the conservation treatment hours required to finish the selected pieces during the project time-frame; NYU academic program officers, who seek appropriate professional internship opportunities for their students; and, finally, the students themselves, who seek enriching and challenging summer projects in a great location. All of these expectations were met.

Past surveys by the CCB have identified treatment projects in addition to the continuing Vanderbilt Mansion Gilded Furniture project that are also good matches for summer interns. These projects include stabilization of an exterior painted frieze at Saint-Gaudens NHS in New

Hampshire, treatment of plaster sculpture at Weir Farm NHS in Connecticut, and conservation of sculpture and large historic objects in the home and library of Thomas Edison in New Jersey. When funding for these projects is in place, they will be advertised to the conservation training programs with hope of attracting bright and skilled summer interns to work on-site with the CCB conservators. Living quarters designed by McKim, Mead and White may not be available for all on-site summer projects, but the parks and their collections are fabulous.

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A Workshop

Integrating Field Archeology, Conservation, and Culturally Appropriate Treatments

An interdisciplinary workshop, Integrating Field Archeology, Conservation and Culturally Appropriate Treatments, was organized through the Curation Program of the National Park Service's (NPS) now defunct Intermountain Cultural Resource Center (ICRC). The workshop occurred in June, 1997, and was held at the Center's Santa Fe, New Mexico, office and at Pecos National Historical Park. The workshop had two primary purposes. One purpose was to provide training on fundamental field conservation philosophies, techniques, and materials. The workshop also provided a forum and an opportunity for discussion and training on various aspects of culturally appropriate treatments as they pertain to certain material types, artifacts, and features. The workshop was highly unique in that concepts of culturally appropriate treatment were linked with those of field archeology, field conservation, and museum management.

There is a long history of collaboration between European archeologists and conservators

on archeological field projects. This has resulted in several notable publications, including: *Conservation on Archeological Excavations*,¹ *The Elements of Archeological Conservation*,² *Retrieval of Objects from Archeological Sites*,³ and *First Aid for Finds*.⁴ Such collaboration is the exception rather than the rule in the United States, however. It is not surprising, therefore, that the single comprehensive U.S. publication in this area is *A Conservation Manual for the Field Archeologist*, by Catherine Sease.⁵ The Sease publication served as the main 'reference' for the workshop. The need to further integrate the principles of archeology, conservation, museum management, and general resource management in the planning and execution of archeological field projects has been recognized as a need for many years in the U.S. and has been called for in numerous publications.⁶ While we have seen some progress through national and regional initiatives on archeological site protection and collection management in general, archeological field conservation remains virtually invisible. This is of particular concern when publication such as "The Federal Curation

Regulations” (36 CFR 79)⁷ and “Federal Archeological Contracting: Utilizing the Competitive Process”⁸ are examined.

If one considers the execution of an archeological project as a process, the process may be divided into planning, field, laboratory, reporting, and repository phases. In such a continuum, archeologists, curators, resource managers, tribal representatives and other cultural specialists can be seen as having joint responsibilities during each phase. Given the recognized need for expanded interdisciplinary collaboration and joint or interdisciplinary responsibilities, this workshop was designed to illustrate the benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration, to facilitate dialogue and promote collaboration, and to serve as a potential model for further efforts in these areas.

The workshop was funded under the NPS’s Cultural Resource Training Initiative. Cosponsors and partners for the workshop represented diverse organizations, institutions and levels of government. For example, representatives from the Pueblo of Jemez served as instructors and, through their Historic Preservation Office, the Pueblo served as a cosponsor. Other sponsors and instructors represented the Office of Archeological Studies of the Museum of New Mexico, the Graduate School for Historic Preservation at the University of Pennsylvania, Pecos National Historical Park, and Dean and Associates Conservation Services of Portland, Oregon. Zuni Tribal Historic Preservation Office personnel, private conservators from Santa Fe and the South Florida Conservation Center,

along with staff from the ICRC Curation Program also served as instructors. Everyone attending the workshop brought with them their own particular experiences, professional training, and cultural perspectives, from which others benefitted. Of particular interest were the perspectives shared by participants from the Crow, Navajo, Lakota, San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Zuni and Jemez tribes.

Workshop sessions included: general introductions to the history and philosophy of conservation; critical aspects of planning for conservation, curation, and consultation with affiliated tribes in the early stages of project development; and various basic issues pertinent to conservation in field archeology settings. Separate sessions were devoted to the preservation of features and in-situ preservation concerns. Additional sessions focused on discussions and presentations of the methods and materials appropriate to certain material types such as metals, faunal or botanical samples, bone and shell artifacts, glass and ceramics, and wood or other organics encountered under a variety of site conditions.

One of the highlights of the workshop, according to all participants, was the tribal representative-led panel covering specific topics of culturally appropriate treatment. These topics are potentially very sensitive and emotionally charged. Nevertheless, the discussions were frank and informative. Representatives from the Pueblo of Jemez discussed certain concerns the pueblo has with the care and handling of objects from their heritage and site etiquette when on the pueblo’s ancestral sites. The concerns were not only for the physical and spiritual well being of the objects, but also for the people handling them and for the pueblo as an organic whole. Discussions by representatives from Zuni Pueblo also emphasized the special concerns of the Zuni people. A guest presenter from the Navajo Nation expressed concerns about the typical methods and materials used by museums during fumigation and other preservation-related activities. The methods and materials used, while physically preserving the object, may in fact have serious detrimental effects on the spiritual well-being of objects, especially ceremonial and other sacred objects. Other discussions and presentations covered culturally appropriate treatment issues resulting from consultations held as part of

Field Conservation Workshop artifact recovery exercise at Pecos National Historical site. Photo courtesy the author.



implementing the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. These included keeping associated funerary objects and ancestral remains together while in the custody of museums, allowing zoomorphic and anthropomorphic objects access to fresh air, ensuring containers housing ancestral remains do not have a solid lid, that ancestral remains are not in association with plastics, and others

Two days of the workshop were held on site at Pecos National Historical Park. The park's sites served as a focal point for several discussions. It illustrated decades of in-site preservation strategies, diverse methods of interpreting sacred and secular spaces, and approaches to museum collection use and storage. Another highlight of the workshop was the field recovery exercise held at the park. The author and Erik Blinman created a simulated archeological site comprised of several excavation units several weeks before the workshop occurred. The intent was to simulate a variety of preservation-related, consultation-related, and data-related decision points one might encounter during an archeological project. Each unit was comprised of a wide range of preservation conditions, material types, and objects. These included: burnt/worked wood and bone, whole/broken ceramics and glass; features such as hearths and caches of artifacts/food stuffs, decorated collapsed earthen wall surfaces, fragile metals and composite objects, and paper/textiles. All participants and instructors were assigned to teams and each team was responsible for 'excavating' one of the units employing the methods and materials discussed earlier during the workshop.

Along with the Sease publication, each participant received a notebook containing copies of several conservation articles and bibliographies on archeological conservation and historic preservation. The notebook was also sent to over 125 offices in an effort to encourage and support future workshops. The notebook was distributed to all tribal historic preservation offices, National Park Service sites in the Intermountain Region and those in other regions with substantial archeological collections responsibilities, and to selected universities.

Clearly the workshop was a success in and of itself. More importantly, however, it clearly demonstrated both the need for and the potential benefits of integrating the perspectives of indigenous peoples, archeology, conservation and

museum management in the execution of archeological projects. Two points made by all workshop participants and instructors alike were that more training of this type is needed on a regular basis and that topics covered during the workshop must become a component of U.S. academic training. Both will help to ensure such training becomes institutionalized and not left up to infrequently held workshops such as this one.

Notes

- ¹ N.P. Stanley Price, ed., *Conservation on Archeological Excavations*, (Rome, Italy: I.C.C.R.O.M., 1984).
- ² J.M. Cronyn, 1990, *The Elements of Archeological Conservation*, (NY and London: Routledge, 1993)
- ³ Robert Payton, ed., *Retrieval of Objects from Archeological Sites*. (Clwyd, Wales: Archetype Publications, 1992).
- ⁴ David Watkins, ed., 1987 *First Aid For Finds*. 2nd Revised Edition. (England: Rescue and UKIC Archeology Section, 1987)
- ⁵ Catherine Sease, 1992, *A Conservation Manual for the Field Archeologist. Archeological Research Tools 4*. (Los Angeles: UCLA, 1992).
- ⁶ Richard I. Ford, "Systematic Research Collections in Anthropology: An Irreplaceable National Resource." In *Report of Conference Sponsored by the Council for Museum Anthropology and the N.S.F. Peabody Museum*, 1997; Catherine Sease, *A Conservation Manual*; Sydel Silverman, and Nancy J. Parezo, eds., 1995 *Preserving the Anthropological Record*, 2nd ed. (NY: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Inc., 1995); N.I.C., 1984; N.I.C., 1990; National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property, Ethnographic and Archaeological Conservation in the United States," (Washington, DC: NIC, 1984); National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property, "A Suggested Curriculum for Training in Ethnographic and Archaeological Conservation," (Washington: DC, 1984); National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property, *Training for Collections Care and Maintenance: A Suggested Curriculum*, Volume I: Archaeology and Ethnology," (Washington, DC: NIC, 1990);
- ⁷ U.S. Department of the Interior, 1991 36CFRPart79. "Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archeological Collections." (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1991).
- ⁸ Jameson, John Jr., et al., Technical Brief No. 7 (revised), Federal Archeological Contracting: Utilizing the Competitive Procurement Process (Washington, DC: NPS, 1992).

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